

“Create Your Own Insignia at Home”

National Museum of the American Sailor Activity

In the U.S. Navy if an enlisted sailor wants to advance in their career, they have to attend additional schooling at specialty A or C Schools. Upon completing this schooling, they will receive a designated rate, or as civilians like to put it, a job.

The number and types of ratings will vary as the needs of the Navy change. When the Navy was first established on October 13, 1775 there were only seven rates: *Boatswain’s Mate, Quartermaster, Gunner’s Mate, Master-at-Arms, Cook, Armorer, and Sailmaker*. However, the Navy’s rating system had to adapt as society and technology continued to advance. With the addition of things like steam-powered ships, aviation, and eventually digital technology new rates had to be established so sailors could successfully complete these new “jobs.”

What makes Navy rates so special? Each rate in the Navy is assigned its own unique insignia that acts as a distinguishing mark or sign. No two insignias are the same! Insignias include features that highlight the sailor’s specific rate. For instance, to the right are examples of current Navy insignias. An Equipment Operator (EO) features a bulldozer and a Musician (MU) has a lyre but a Machinist Mate (MM) has a three-bladed propeller. Sailors proudly wear their insignia badges on their uniforms (usually on their arm or collar) to identify their rate. An experienced naval historian might even be able to tell what a sailor’s rate is just by glancing at their badge.



Think of someone you know who has a specific job. This could be a parent or guardian, older sibling, camp counselor, or maybe even your teacher. If they had to wear an insignia badge, what might it look like? If they already have a symbol that represents their job, what would you change about it? Your task today is to create a new insignia badge!

Supplies

- Paper
- Crayons, colored pencils, or markers

Instructions

1. Pick the person who you want to design an insignia for and talk with them about what their job is. Where do they work? Do they have a specific job title? What do they do every day?
2. Once you have an idea of what the person’s job is, you should pick one or two symbols that you think best summarizes what they do.
3. You can either print these symbols or draw it yourself – remember to be creative!
4. Share your new insignia and a brief description of the job with us by tagging us on Facebook (National Museum of the American Sailor) or Instagram (@ntlmuseumamericansailor).



Did you know that many old ratings were split into new ratings during World War II? As a result, 30 pre-war ratings ballooned to about 200 ratings by the war’s end in 1945.

Looking for some inspiration? Check out these insignia examples!



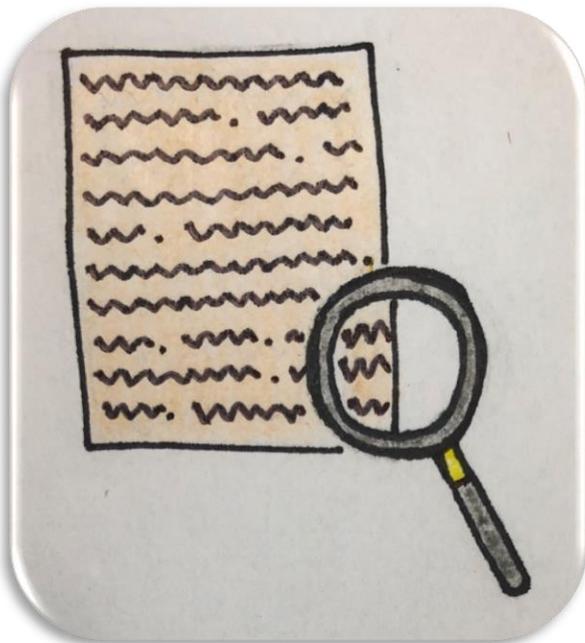
Forestry

Foresters plan and help carry out forestry projects, like planting new trees, monitoring and conserving wildlife habitats, choosing and preparing timber plots, assessing current timber value and suppressing forest fires.



Collections Manager

A collections manager (like the one at NMAS) is responsible for preserving and collecting artifacts relating to the organization's mission. Wearing gloves when handling artifacts ensures their safety and longevity for visitors to enjoy!



Archivist

Archivists are responsible for assembling, cataloguing, preserving and managing valuable two dimensional artifacts like photographs, letters, or newspapers – just like at NMAS!



Veterinarians (Vet)

Veterinarians care for the health of animals and work to protect public health. They diagnose, treat, and research medical conditions and diseases of pets, livestock, and other animals.